I am reporting only on areas in New York State that I (and usually my family) have personally visited since the New York State Anti-Nudity Law went into effect in July 1983.

I most often go to nude beaches in the Fire Island National Seashore. The Fire Island National Seashore is an ocean beach about thirty miles long and nudity is tolerated on at least half the beachfront. The beach is patrolled by both Suffolk County police and National Park Service rangers. Although the Suffolk County police patrol regularly, I have never in the time the anti-nudity law has been in effect seen the police take any note of nudity as they drive past large numbers of nude people of both sexes. National Park Service rangers do take note of nudity and say (probably only off the record) that it is their policy to ask people who are nude outside the tolerated areas to move to the tolerated areas if they wish to be nude. I and others I have been with have occasionally been politely asked to move short distances when nude, or, when hiking nude, to be dressed when passing through specific areas. I have never observed disorderly behavior in nude areas of the Fire Island National Seashore, but I do remember one occasion on which National Park Service rangers were stationed at the heavily-used nude beach west of Smith Point Park at the request of nude women to protect them from harrassment. They took no action against the hundreds of nude people there. In general, in the Fire Island National Seashore attitudes of law-enforcement people and most others toward nudity are close to ideal.

I have led clothing-optional hikes with both male and female hikers in both the Fire Island National Seashore and in Minnewaska State Park (near New Paltz, New York). They have all proceeded without incident except for Fire Island National Seashore rangers' requesting that we be clothed in certain small areas. Nudity is tolerated in much of Minnewaska State Park but I have never seen a direct confrontation between any ranger and nudes, in spite of the fact that in certain areas in the park most people are nude.

I have also seen instances in both Adirondack State Park and Harriman State Park in which rangers have been aware of nude people in backcountry locations but have taken no action. It seems, though, that where nudity is tolerated in New York State parks rangers generally avoid seeing it, whereas in the Fire Island National Seashore they openly condone and actively manage it.

Dick

Meredith Springer, October 1, 1986